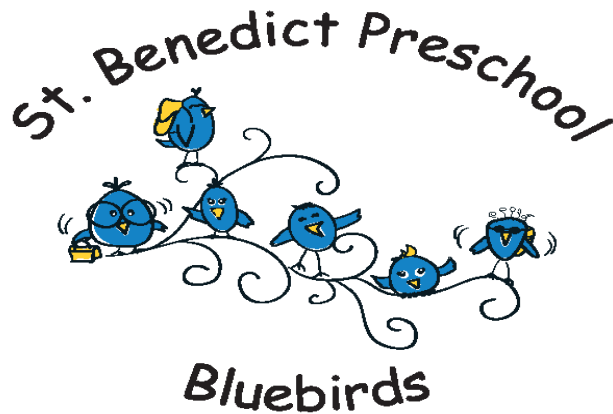


St. Benedict Preschool

2017-2018

Family Handbook



*"We are the Bluebirds, St. Benedict Bluebirds!
We are so happy to come to school,
We play with friends, and learn new things,
So let's clap and shout HOOORAY!"*
(Tune: "You are my Sunshine")

Sandra Foltz
Preschool Director
11045 Parsons Road
Johns Creek, GA. 30097
678-992-2052
sfoltz@stbenedict.net





To our Families,

I want to extend a warm welcome to all families in our Preschool this school year! I have been the director of this preschool since the beginning, 28 years ago! I feel very blessed to be here at St. Benedict. I have a BA in Early Childhood/Elementary Education and have worked with preschool children for over 36 years. I am a mother of four children, who are 32, 30, 29 and 15 years of age and I am a Grandmother to a two year old girl and a one year old boy! I am married to Ron and our family lives in Cumming. I am originally from Pensacola Florida and my favorite activity would be visiting the beach whenever I can.

I think of this job as an opportunity to serve our Lord and feel strongly that He brings the families and teachers here for a reason. Our teachers are very dedicated to providing an environment that will foster growth cognitively, physically, spiritually, emotionally and socially for your child. We take this responsibility seriously and begin each day in prayer asking for His guidance and protection of our students.

Our school has a mascot which is a bluebird! We have "spirit days" and teachers and students may wear their bluebird T-shirts that day. T-Shirts are available for purchase; just contact me if you are interested. Your child may come home singing our school song and the words for it are on the front cover of this handbook.

This handbook will give you the information you will need regarding school philosophy, policies and procedures. All children who attend our Preschool program will be respected and cared for in a manner consistent with our Christian beliefs. We welcome your interest and support and look forward to being a part of your child's life.

God Bless You,
Sandra Foltz



From our Pastor, Father Paul Flood

Dear Parents,

I want to take this opportunity to welcome all our children to St. Benedict's Pre-School Program.

Your children greet us in the morning and greet us as we go to lunch. Each greeting is accompanied with a smile and that makes my day!

Parents, I thank you for supporting our Pre-School program. I also want to reassure you that all policies and procedures of the Archdiocese of Atlanta concerning the safety of your children are followed here at St. Benedict Catholic Church.

The Archdiocese has a full-time Director of Parish-Based Early Childhood Programs. There are 2 visits to our Preschool each year which provides us with a Quality Assurance Report based on the observations of the school. The focus of the report is to ensure that health and safety procedures are followed, as well as ensuring a developmentally appropriate educational program for our students is in place. A copy of our reports can be available to you upon request, and I am proud to say that our school exceeds the requirements required.

My thanks to Sandra Foltz (Director) and her dedicated team of teachers.

Sincerely in Christ,
Fr. Paul A. Flood, Pastor

Mission Statement

The mission of the Preschool at St. Benedict Catholic Church is to provide a safe and stimulating environment in which children can discover and learn new concepts, as well as develop meaningful relationships with teachers and friends.



Heavenly Father,

*Thank you for the gift of this child to raise,
this life to share, this mind to help mold,
this body to nurture, and this spirit to enrich.*

*Let me never betray this child's trust,
dampen this child's hope, or discourage
this child's dreams.*

Help me dear Lord to help this precious child become all You mean him to be.

*Let Your grace and love fall on him like gentle breezes and give him inner strength
and peace and patience for the journey ahead.*

Amen

From the book, Guide My Feet, by Marian Wright Edelman

Philosophy, Goals and Objectives

We believe the preschool years should be happy and relaxed, a time in which children feel loved, accepted and successful. We believe that the preschool years should help to stimulate the child's awareness and love of God. This is the beginning of a new phase of life for them, the school years, and it is our desire to establish a positive experience for them—one that they can build on for coming to church and also for future educational classes. Our goals and objectives are to provide children the following opportunities:

1. To develop the total child: spiritually, emotionally, physically, socially, and cognitively.
2. To develop positive and responsible relationships with other children and adults.
3. To provide a curriculum that is designed to provide age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate activities that will encourage success and creativity.
4. To provide a learning environment that offers each child opportunities to work on basic small motor and large motor skills, necessary for pre-writing, pre-reading, math and science, suitable to their developmental level.
5. To promote our faith in God, by incorporating prayers, chapel visits, and other age-appropriate religious activities in the classroom.

Our Preschool welcomes all children regardless of their national origin, race or religion.

We will not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, or natural origin.



Curriculum

Our teachers come to us with a variety of educational experiences and years of teaching. All teachers are required to obtain ten staff development hours each year. The Archdiocese sponsors a Summer Education Institute that our staff participates in, and our school offers other training programs, CPR training, and Curriculum training.

Our school uses a traditional approach to teaching. Our daily schedule includes prayer, small group time, outdoor time, lunch, restroom, story time, art and center time. Learning centers are incorporated in the daily routine, which enables the teacher to plan for activities that encourages students to discover and explore at their own pace as well as giving them the chance to work in small groups on specific skills or art projects. Each age group has a curriculum which lists our objectives and themes. You can review our curriculum objectives at our website by clicking the “Curriculum” button.

Religion is part of the curriculum for all age groups. The 2 year old MMO classes will begin having Chapel story-times in October. The three year and Pre-K classes will have weekly chapel visits beginning in September and ending the second week of May. Our Religion teacher this year is Mrs. Julie Stevens. Please refer to your religion curriculum guide in your “New Student Packet” for more information.

Music is incorporated in the classrooms every day, however, once a month a music teacher will come in to share musical instruments and special songs for the 3 year old and Pre-K classes. We also have a science teacher who will visit the Pre-K classes once a week and do science activities with the children.

Exemption

St. Benedict Preschool operates under the supervision of the Archdiocese of Atlanta, Office of Catholic Schools. The Office of Catholic Schools ensures that this program follows the prescribed guidelines for parish early childhood programs. This preschool holds a **Certificate of Exemption** from licensure from the State of Georgia (Bright from the Start). Parish preschools in good standing are eligible to renew their Archdiocesan Charter every 5 years.

- The Director attends all Archdiocesan Preschool Directors’ Forums
- The Director and Staff attend Professional development courses each year to maintain 10 hours of training each year
- Staff maintains certification in CPR and First Aid

About our school



Hours and Contact Information

- The hours of operation for the Preschool office are 9:00 am-2:00 pm, Monday-Friday. Our class times are:
 - 2-year old Mother's Morning Out: August: 9:30-12:00 noon;
September-May 9:30-1:00
 - 3-year and Pre-K Preschool hours are 9:30-1:00
- Our email address: sfoltz@stbenedict.net
- Our phone number is [678-992-2052](tel:678-992-2052)
- Preschool website is located on the St. Benedict Church website: <http://stbenedict.net/info/welcome/preschool.html>

School Policies and Procedures

Tuition

There is a non-refundable Registration fee of \$225.00 (\$350 per family) that is due when your child is registered. The monthly tuition rate for this school year will be:

- 2 Year: 2 days \$235 3 days: \$270 4 days: \$295
- 3 Year: 2 days \$235 3 days: \$270 4 days: \$295 5 days: \$315
- Pre-K: 4 days: \$300 5 days \$320 (\$15.00 workbook fee)

There is a 5% discount for 2 or more children in the school.

Tuition is due the first week of each month, **no later than the 10th of each month.** Please notify the Director if there are circumstances that a late payment is necessary. **Electronic Tuition** Payments through Vanco Services: "e Tuition" is the **preferred method of payment.** You may set-up your e Tuition payments on the Preschool website by clicking on the e Tuition button. Please notice that there are certain buttons for the different categories of payments. When paying TUITION please submit payment under this category. If you decide to do automatic payments, please remember to stop after your May payment. Please inform the Director if you do not wish to participate in this form of payment. The only other method of payment accepted is by a check-no cash please.

Tuition Due to Absences/Family Vacation

Absences due to illness, school holidays, **vacations** or any other circumstances **DO NOT** affect the monthly charge. Our Tuition collected each month determines our budget and salaries for teachers and has been calculated by the number of days we are in school for the year and then divided by the number of months from September-May. There is no tuition for August.

Terminating Enrollment

If you decide to leave the Preschool, **a 30 day written notice of one month is required.** You will be responsible for tuition for that month.

Arrival/Dismissal/Carpool

Security

Our doors to the school will be locked at 9:45. Please make every effort to arrive before 9:30!

After 9:45 you will need to:

1. Check to see if the elevator is open; if not then-
2. Call the Preschool office, 678-992-2052- if no one answers, then-
3. Go to the receptionist and ask her to call the alternate phone numbers.

Arrival

Please do not bring your child into school before 9:20 because the teachers are preparing for the day. Morning carpool begins at **9:20** and will last until **9:35**. After 9:35 children will go downstairs to the classroom and begin their day. If you arrive after 9:35 please park your car in a parking spot (not the driveway, handicap or reserved parking spots) and walk your child into the building. We ask that you make every attempt to be at school **before 9:30**. We know that occasionally things will happen that will cause us to run late, however there are those who consistently run late and may not realize the implications this has for a small child and the teacher. When arriving late your child misses out on:

- The chance to independently take care of their needs with things such as hanging up their backpacks/coats, getting their snack out and putting it in the right location, etc.
- Being greeted by their teachers and others in the routine of the day. A lot of classes have a special greeting song that all participate in.
- Being a part of Morning Prayer and activities such as classroom helper selections, calendar, name recognition, weather, etc.
- Finding out if there are special activities/themes for the day

Children 2-5 years of age have a small attention span and every time there is an interruption of a late child coming into class, the teacher has to regroup her students and get them back on task. We know you would want your child to participate in the first part of the preschool day activities that help them adjust to the new school day, so please **make this a priority for your child to arrive on time!**

Dismissal

Afternoon dismissal begins at 11:55 for the 2 year classes in August and 12:55 for 2 year classes September-May. Three year old classes and Pre-K classes begin dismissal at 12:55. Please call the school and leave a message at the front desk (**770-442-5903**), if you will be **late**. **You are considered late after 12:10 for MMO in Aug and 1:10 p.m. for Preschool.**

Carpool

Most families enjoy using the carpool system and that is where you will drop-off or pick-up your child without getting out of your car. Please advise anyone who could be participating in carpool of our policies. You are welcome to walk in with your child for drop-off or pick-up if you prefer.

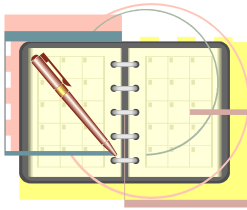
Carpool for the 2 year classes

The beginning of the year is the most difficult time for this age group, emotionally and physically (trying to maneuver backpacks and stairs), so for this reason we will have the parents drop-off and pick-up their children at the classroom door. A teacher will be waiting to help you with backpacks and then to escort the child into the classroom. We ask that you make a quick goodbye and then move to indoor playroom if your child is having problems with separating. We will give you updates every 5-10 minutes. Each case of separation anxiety is a little different and the procedures may be different for each case. We will work with each family on an individual basis. Generally most children adapt within a couple of weeks. At dismissal the teacher will dismiss one child at a time by the locker area. In order to keep our children safe we ask that you please wait until the teacher calls you over. Carpool will start for the 2 year classes as soon as the class as a whole is ready, and will be determined by the classroom teachers. You will be notified when carpool will begin. We hope to start carpool within 2 to 4 weeks of school starting.



Carpool Procedures:

- All cars should line up and wait for the carpool to start (9:20). When it is time to begin carpool, a teacher will signal the first cars to move forward to the drop-off and pick-up area. **You do not have the right-of-way to cross the main driveway intersection so it is your responsibility to move across this intersection when it is clear and safe to do so.** You should pull to the driveway opening closest to the building and pull up by the flagpoles.
- The teachers will line up outside to take the children out of the cars and bring them into the building where their teacher and class will be waiting inside the Parish Life Center. Because of the number of children, we cannot guarantee that your child's teacher will be able to assist your child getting out of the car.
- **Once you have proceeded to the car pool lane, please do not text or use your cell phone.** We need your full attention to keep our carpool safe for all.
- Children may **not** get out of their car without a teacher.
- At 9:35 the children will be escorted to their classroom. At 9:45 our doors will be locked.
- If you arrive after 9:35, you will have to walk your child inside, check to see if the elevator is open and if not call the Preschool office at 678-992-2052 and if no one answers please ask the receptionist to call the alternate phone numbers.
- **No child is allowed to walk in unescorted.**
- Afternoon dismissal begins at 12:55. Hang your carpool number from the front mirror or hold it up for the person at the door to see it. When it is time to begin carpool a teacher will signal the first cars to move forward to the drop-off and pick-up area.
- After your child is in the car, please pull over to an empty parking space to buckle your child in. ***We are not permitted to fasten your child in their car seat.*** Please DO NOT get out of your car in the carpool line.
- If you are involved in a carpool with another family, please notify us and display all numbers involved with pick-up.
- If you lose your carpool number you can ask the office for a new one.
- If someone besides the usual designated person is to pick your child up from school, please call or write a note that identifies the authorized person. Identification with a driver's license will be required. Your child will not be given to someone we are not expecting.
- Please **do not** park in the main driveway of the church, reserved parking spots or handicap parking (unless you have the handicap permit).
- **Do not pull around cars that are waiting,** unless you are directed by a teacher to do so.
- Please watch for the parishioners who will be leaving the church. Sometimes they are not aware of the preschool traffic and will not be as careful as they should be!
- Quick questions are fine, however if a discussion is needed, please call the teacher at school, e-mail them or wait until carpool is over.
- Please discuss our policies with anyone who might participate with arrival or dismissal for your child (including dads, grandparents, and friends).
- Please follow the diagram on the handout in your "New Student Packet" for the direction of the carpool line-up.



School Calendar

In case of severe weather, our Preschool generally follows the Fulton County School closings, however not in all cases so please watch for an email from your teacher for confirmation.

Our school calendar for the 2017-2018 school year will be (*look below):

August 23	First week of School
September 4	Labor Day Holiday
September 26	Special Visitor
October 9	Fulton County Teacher Workday/Preschool Closed
October 17 week:	Fire Truck Visit (specific date TBD)
October 24	Special Event: Pumpkin Patch Festival
November 6-10	Teacher Appreciation Week
November 17	Special Event: Feast Day: Parents invited
November 20-24	Thanksgiving Holidays
December 19	Special Event: 1:00 Christmas Program: All Classes
December 21-January 3	Christmas Holidays (back at school on the 4th)
January 15	Martin Luther King Holiday (school closed)
January 26	Registration Application Due-Current Preschool Students
February 1	Special Visitor
February 16/19	Fulton County off/Preschool Closed
February 27	Special Event: Let's Pretend Olympics
March 9	Fulton County Teacher Workday/Preschool Closed
March 13	Special Event: St. Joseph/Dad Celebration
March 27/28	Special Event: Egg Hunt
March 29/30	Holy Thursday/Good Friday-Preschool Closed
April 2-6	Spring Break: School Closed
May 8	Special Event: Crowning of Mary & Mom Celebration
Wednesday, May 23	1:00 Graduation for PRE-K
Thursday, May 24	Last Day for All classes

****ALL DATES ARE TENTATIVE AND MAY NEED TO BE RE-SCHEDULED-
Please check your monthly newsletters for official dates**

Field Trips/Special Events

Due to safety and liability reasons, our preschool will *not* offer field trips for any classes. Our Preschool offers many activities each month that involve the children and their families in special events. Highlighted days include Pumpkin Patch Festival, Thanksgiving Feast, Christmas Nativity, Let's Pretend Olympics, Easter Egg Hunts, Crowning of Mary & Mom Celebration, St. Joseph & Dad Celebration and Graduation. We also have *Special Visitors* that provide us with puppet shows, magic shows, storytelling, and music. All children are invited, even if the event falls on a day that your child is not scheduled to be here. Please check the monthly newsletter for dates.



Communication and Parent Involvement

Newsletters

During the last week of each month, we will send home a tuition envelope with a monthly newsletter, Scholastic Book Order forms, and information for important upcoming events. Please put this newsletter in a safe spot, so that you can check it for important dates, such as, special visitors/events, etc. We feel that this is one way to communicate to you what your child will be doing each month which is extremely important if we want to work together effectively. **The tuition envelope needs to be returned by the 10th of each month.** If you are interested in ordering books from the Scholastic Book Club, you can order online using our class code: **H27KL** by the 5th of each month. The Preschool receives *Bonus Points* for every book purchased, which are used to buy books for the school or other classroom items they offer. Please consider purchasing at least 1 book in September. Scholastic offers us a great opportunity for bonus points that month (usually 8-10 times normal rates).

Weekly Reports

Teachers are required to send weekly reports each week. They will do this on Friday and it will be emailed to the address you have provided to them.

Conferences

Teachers will schedule a conference in January to go over a progress report. If you desire to conference with the teacher any time before January or again at the end of the year, we are happy to schedule additional times as needed. If you have a concern about your child or a school policy, please contact the Director and teacher with written notes, emails or phone calls. We will respond promptly, working together to resolve any issues.

Custodial Rights

In the event that there are custody arrangements involving a court order our preschool needs to have on file the legal court documentation establishing the custodial rights of the parent or guardian or the legal court documentation denying custodial rights to a parent. We cannot deny a parent's access to their child without proper documentation.

Room Parents

There will be 2 parents from each class who will take on the role of organizing parents to help with special events, teacher celebrations, gift giving and the end-of-the-year class party. These parents will create an e-mail class list that will be used for any communication needed for these activities. More information and sign-ups will be at your child's Open House meeting. If you are new to our school after September, please ask the classroom teacher to put you in touch with the Room Parents representing your class.

Parent Involvement with Special Events

During the school year, as listed on the previous page, our school has special events scheduled. Room Parents will notify you by email (about 2 weeks before the event) to ask for food/prize/craft donations or ask if you would like to help run the event or help with set-up of these events. These events take the place of the classroom parties that we use to have such as Halloween, Christmas, Thanksgiving, Valentines, or Easter parties. There will only be one classroom party which is on the last day of school. You also have the opportunity to visit your child's classroom on the day their birthday is scheduled to read to the class after lunch.



Food Policies

Food Allergies

If your child has a food allergy, it is your responsibility to alert the Preschool staff in writing of this condition and to also have the proper paperwork and medication available. You will need to get the forms **from the director**. We make every effort to *educate* parents in the class of any food allergies that exist and *encourage* them not to bring in any items that would cause a reaction, **however**, please be advised that the Preschool will not be held responsible for changing any policies regarding snack or lunch to accommodate dietary restrictions. Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to the director. You have already signed-off on this policy on the registration form.

Snack

Our 2 year Preschool is the only class that will have a “Snack-time”. Our three year classes and our Pre-K classes **will not** have a snack time. Lunch for those age groups will be a little earlier in the schedule—around 11:30-11:45. We feel that by eliminating snack time it will give us more time for learning! You will need to decide if your child will be satisfied to wait until 11:30-11:45 to have lunch. If you feel the time period is too long for them we suggest that maybe you arrive at our school a little earlier (around 9:00 am) and have a quick snack for them in the car in our parking lot.

For the **2 year old classes**:

- You will be responsible for bringing in a snack each day.
- Please separate the snack food from the lunch food, by putting the snack in a designated “pencil-pouch” labeled with your child’s name and the word SNACK on it. This helps us with determining *quickly* which food is the snack food and who it belongs to.
- We will provide water to drink.
- We encourage you to provide nutritious food for snack.

Lunch

For lunch, please pack a simple lunch for your child. Simple lunches are best for Preschool children who have a hard time opening and eating messy items. Simple lunches include pre-cut pieces, placed in saran wrap or baggies. We cannot warm up or refrigerate any items. You will also need to pack a drink for lunch and we cannot allow open-faced thermoses or drinks due to accidental spills that might ruin the carpet. Please pack juice boxes or a sipper-spout thermos. Lunchboxes should be labeled with your child’s name. **Whole grapes or hot dogs may present a choking hazard and will need to be cut into small pieces**, even if your child eats them in a whole manner at home. This rule is enforced at school.

Birthdays

The classroom teacher will contact you to schedule a day for your child’s birthday and you will be responsible for bringing in dessert for the entire class on that day. If there is a child with a dietary restriction it will be up to their parent to supply them with an alternative dessert. The date will be posted on the newsletter. Children with summer birthdays will have a “un-birthday” scheduled during in May.

- We encourage brownies, cookies, ice cream cups, or doughnuts. (please avoid large cakes/cupcakes with a lot of frosting as this is usually very messy and most children will only lick the frosting off!)
- We celebrate your child’s birthday by singing the Birthday song, eating a special birthday dessert and your child will get a birthday crown. The teacher will also take a picture for you. We make it very special for them all throughout the day!
- Please understand that the celebration is part of the normal Preschool day and is not considered a “Birthday” party, so please **do not send in plates, treat bags, decorations, etc.** The items should be used at your own party at home.
- If you would like to come after lunch on your child’s birthday celebration, you can read to the class during story-time at 12:30.
- If you plan to give your child a birthday party outside of the school setting we are happy to put invitations in backpacks.



Health/Safety Policies

ONLY A HEALTHY CHILD SHOULD ATTEND PRESCHOOL.

Parents, please be considerate and keep your child at home if **displaying or has displayed within 24 hours** any of these symptoms: diarrhea, vomiting, sore throat, chronic cough, or any contagious disease, or a fever of 100.3 degrees F or higher.

Guidelines for readmission to preschool after these illness and other contagious conditions are:

- **Chicken Pox:** after blisters have become scabs, approximately 7 days after the onset of the rash
- **Conjunctivitis/pink eye:** after 24 hours on medication and no discharge; Viral- 3-5 days, when symptoms have changed
- **Croup:** most cases last 2-5 days; after the “barking” cough subsides
- **Diarrhea:** until stools return to normal form and frequency
- **Fever:** until the child has not had a fever for **24 hours**, without giving fever reducing medication
- **Fifths Disease:** “slapped cheek syndrome”; after the rash appears you are usually not contagious, so others have already been exposed to the virus; seek Physician advice when to return to school
- **Hand, Foot and Mouth:** blisters need to be scabbed over before returning to school
- **Lice:** until after the first treatment and no evidence of live lice
- **Measles:** four days after the rash appears
- **Mumps:** when swelling has subsided
- **Pinworms:** after treatment begins
- **Rash:** a physician needs to determine the cause of the rash and write a note for the school stating when the child is safe to return to school
- **Rubella:** five days after rash appears
- **Runny Nose:** until thick or green discharge is treated. If your child has a continual runny nose due to allergies, you will need to obtain a Doctor’s note stating this is the cause and safe to return to school
- **Strep Throat:** until antibiotic is in the system for 24 hours
- **Vomiting:** if a child has vomited you must wait at least 24 hours before returning to school and should be exhibiting normal behavior and diet.

If your child has experienced a contagious disease not listed above, please notify the preschool and obtain a note from your pediatrician informing when your child is safe to return to school.

Children treated with antibiotics must complete a full 24 hours of treatment before returning to the school.

No child should come to school visibly ill. If your child is out sick, please call or email the preschool office so that we can inform the teachers. We will notify the parents if we are aware of any contagious disease that has been exposed to the students. The staff cannot give out medications (antibiotics), even over the counter medications, (Tylenol, etc.)

Please make sure we have current phone numbers, so that we will be able to contact you if your child becomes sick or hurt at school. If a serious injury occurs and the Director believes an ambulance needs to be called, the child will be taken to Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta @ Scottish Rite and the parent will be instructed to meet the staff person there.

Asthma Inhalers and EpiPens

A medical form must be completed by the parent and prescribed by a physician. The specific dosage and conditions for administration must be noted. Inhalers and EpiPens must be labeled by the dispensing pharmacy and must include a child’s name, dosage and the name of the prescribing physician.

Immunizations

All children attending Catholic parish preschools must meet Georgia state standards for immunization. Preschools may require 3231 vaccination forms to be current before the child enters the program.

- **Religious Exemption**

Catholic doctrine does not support an exemption from immunization based upon a matter of conscience/religious exemption. For this reason, religious exemptions are not accepted in parish preschool programs.

- **Medical Exemption**

The medical exemption is applicable when a child has a long-term condition that contraindicates immunization. Parents requesting exemption from immunization must provide a detailed explanation of the child's condition as documented by his pediatrician. The Archdiocese of Atlanta reserves the right to obtain a second opinion. The medical exemption must be renewed annually.

- **Delayed/Alternative Vaccination Schedules**

Parents whose children are on a delayed or alternative vaccination schedule must submit documentation from child's pediatrician indicating the reason for the delayed/alternative schedule and the vaccination schedule that will be followed.

- **Epidemic, Outbreak, Exposure**

In the event of a contagious disease epidemic, outbreak or exposure, children with medical exemptions or delayed/alternative vaccination schedules will be required to remain at home until their health and safety is no longer at risk.

Fire Drills

We are required to have monthly fire drills for the Preschool. Each month a different day is chosen so that each class will participate several times a year in the drill. Teachers will explain to the children our procedures and the importance of why we do fire drills before the first drill.

Severe Weather Drills

We are required to have severe weather drills three times in a school year. Our procedure for the severe weather drill is to gather a few reading books, and a flashlight and walk the children to an interior classroom that has no windows. This drill only last a few minutes. It is not our intent to scare any child. Please let us know if your child has reacted in a negative manner at home towards them.

Lock-Down

Our school will be in Lock Down if there is a threat of an unwelcome visitor or if there is an active threat to students or staff in the church building. We will have two lockdown drills each school year. For a lock down drill the children will stay in the classroom with their teachers who will lock the door and put a covering over the door window. Classrooms will be locked and not accessible to anyone until the threat has been cleared.

Evacuations

In case of an evacuation that would require us to leave the church grounds during Preschool hours, the children will exit through the apse doors and then go down the outside stairs to the lower parking lot. As soon as all of our classes have gathered, and the children are all accounted for, we will escort the children to Taylor Lodge. Using our emergency notebook with phone numbers, we will begin calling parents for pick-up.



Positive Guidance and Discipline Policies

The goals for positive guidance are to help the child make good choices about behavior, develop self-control, accept suggestions for redirection, and to be responsible for his actions.

Each child will be treated in a positive manner with gentle reminders of classroom and church rules. When a child misbehaves, the first course of action will be to redirect the negative behavior and find alternatives to help the child get back on track. Most times this is all that is needed to eliminate the negative behavior. Each classroom has a “Prayer Corner” which is for those children who will choose to take some time to sit and relax for a few minutes; however, a teacher may also use this area for a disruptive child which will give them an opportunity to be removed from a negative situation. If this is needed, the child will spend one minute per age (2 minutes for 2 year old, etc.) in this area. Under no circumstance will a child be disciplined with corporal punishment. If we continue to have problems, the child may visit the Director’s office to talk about the situation and at that point we may involve the parents to work on how we can solve the problem together.

Dismissal Policy

It is the goal of the Preschool at St. Benedict to provide each child with a well-rounded, Christian educational program in a safe and healthy environment. However, for different reasons some children or parents may not find a favorable match with our

The child is not ready for school:

Children adapt to new experiences at their own pace. It has been our experience that most children will adapt to the preschool structure within 3 weeks. If your child is having a difficult time adjusting during this three-week period, we will involve you in conversation, observation and in the decision making process of determining what is in the best interest of your child.

Special Needs:

All children come to us as unique individuals. St. Benedict Preschool will strive to include all children in our classes; however it may be determined after observations and consideration by the teachers, administration and parents that our program may not be the best fit due to the child’s physical, emotional, and academic needs.

The child displays socially unacceptable behavior:

Children who exhibit very aggressive or threatening behavior, e.g. biting, punching, or kicking, endanger the safety of other children and staff. In these instances we will work with both the child and the parents to turn around the negative behavior. If there is no significant progress made as a result of these efforts, we will have to withdraw the child from the program. Every effort will be made to try and put the child back in the program at a later date, if an opening occurs.

Failure to follow preschool policies and guidelines:

The preschool operates under specific guidelines and policies set by the Pastor, the Archdiocese of Atlanta and the Preschool Director. In order for our program to be successful, it is important for everyone, both parents and children, to observe these policies and guidelines, which have been developed for the common good. Should either the parents or the child demonstrate a consistent difficulty in observing these policies and guidelines, we may choose to disenroll the child from the Preschool.



“Handy” Information

School Supplies

We ask that parents send in supplies that will be used by the class. Please refer the class list of supplies found in the New Student Packet in the Teacher welcome letter/Open House outline.

Photographs

Your child will be photographed throughout the school year by the classroom teachers. The photographs will be used for art projects, special books, and occasionally for weekly church bulletin, Preschool website/Preschool informational brochures. Your child’s name and personal information will never be used. We will not videotape your child, unless a teacher asks special permission to do so, and in that event you will be notified. In circumstances in which your child will be singing in a special program/celebration such as the Christmas program, please be informed that many parents do video tape and take pictures. Although they are focused on taking pictures of their own child, it is inevitable that others could also be in the picture or video. If you do not want any possibility of this occurring, then please notify the school that your child will not participate in the activity named. Please be sensitive when posting classroom photos to any type of Social Media, which includes blogs, Facebook, Twitter, etc. Please do not post pictures taken on school property where children other than your own are present. The Archdiocese requires all parents to fill out this Photography Release Form located in the New Student packet and it will be kept in your child’s file.

School Pictures

A professional photographer will take individual and class pictures of all children in February. Parents are under no obligation to purchase photos.

Clothing & Possessions

Please label any removable clothing, book bags, or any other items with your child’s name. Dress your child in comfortable PLAY clothes that can get dirty and are bathroom friendly.

For safety reasons, strapless sandals (flip-flops) or shoes are NOT allowed.

Please dress your child in sneakers for school.

Please dress children appropriately for weather conditions, since we go outside if at all possible. We do have some extra clothes at school for bathroom accidents; however, you should **pack an extra pair of underwear** in your child’s backpack for emergencies. Due to sanitary reasons, all children are required to wear underwear at all times.

Toys from home are not allowed unless the teacher has requested it. Guns, knives, ropes and other toys that encourage rough and violent play are not allowed at our preschool.

3 year Class Bathroom Policy

Students entering the 3 year classes need to be potty-trained. Our classrooms for this age group are not equipped with changing tables, therefore the child must be ready to use our bathroom facilities independently, having an understanding of using it and what needs to be done. We work with students who may not be completely trained, however, pull-ups will be required in this case and parents may be called to assist in the changes if the episodes are frequent.

Service Projects

As a ministry of our church we feel it is important to contribute to projects that will help our community. This is an important concept of our faith, to share what we have and always think of ways to give back and help. Each age group will participate in a service project during Lent. More information will be provided in February.

St. Benedict Preschool has the right to amend this handbook